



# News Release

## WISCONSIN ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

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October 15, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### MEDIA ADVISORY

## Wisconsin National Guard's Rapid Reaction Force exercise in Watertown this weekend

The Wisconsin National Guard's Rapid Reaction Force will participate in a multi-agency emergency response exercise Saturday [Oct. 15] in Watertown.

The exercise scenario involves the simulated mid-air explosion of a commercial aircraft over the southwest side of Watertown near the intersection of Milford Street and Commerce Drive, another commercial aircraft crash-landing at the Watertown airport, and a multi-vehicle accident west of the airport near the intersection of Highway 26 and Boomer Street.

In addition to the National Guard, exercise participants include the Watertown Police and Fire Departments, Watertown Emergency Medical Services, Jefferson County Emergency Management, the Jefferson and Dodge County Sheriff's Departments and Wisconsin Emergency Management.

The National Guard's Rapid Reaction Force is currently made up of soldiers from 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery, drawn from the battalion's armories in Milwaukee, Plymouth, Two Rivers and Sussex. It is augmented by platoons from the 32nd Military Police Company of Milwaukee and Madison and the Hayward-based 724th Engineer Battalion. The Reaction Force can provide forces in two packages: a 125-soldier force capable of a speedy initial response anywhere in the state, and a larger force of up to 375 additional soldiers who can respond within 24 hours, if needed, to sustain operations for days after an initial response.

National Guard support to the exercise will also include the 54th Civil Support Team of Madison, the 115th Security Forces Squadron from Truax Field, a reconnaissance aircraft operated by Truax Field's 115th Operations Group, and several UH-60 helicopters from Madison's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation. The National Guard's Joint Operations Center in Madison will monitor the exercise and manage military resources.

— more —

## **Watertown Exercise**

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Among the systems to be tested in the exercise will be communications interoperability between military and civilian agencies, between ground responders and aircraft, and between forward military elements and the Joint Operations Center. The need to improve communications interoperability in Wisconsin was identified in a recent report to Governor Doyle on the state's emergency preparedness.

In this exercise — as in a real-world incident — National Guard forces support local authorities operating in the Incident Command System.

# # # #

**EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS:** News media are welcome to cover the exercise in Watertown Saturday [Oct. 15]. Best coverage opportunities will be after 10 a.m. in the vicinity of the Watertown Airport and in the vicinity of Calvary Baptist School. Up to 300 Wisconsin National Guard troops will be on the ground in Watertown.

Reaction Force soldiers, senior military officials and National Guard public affairs officers will be available during the exercise up until mid-afternoon.

Current National Guard News Releases available at: <http://dma.wi.gov/news.asp>